

SOUTHCOASTTODAY

The Standard-Times

.COM

Presented By

Superfund Records Center

Aerovox

100506

Your Town

Today's Edition

Check It Out

Things To Do

Subscribers Only

About Us

Marketplace

Find a Car
Find a Job
Find a Home
Find a Business
Cashback Mall
Apartment Finder

Your Town

Acushnet
Dartmouth
Fairhaven
Fall River
Freetown
Lakeville
Marion
Mattapoisett
New Bedford
Rochester
Wareham
Westport

Today's Edition

Top Stories
Headlines
Local News
World/Nation
State/Region
Living
Sports
Opinion
Health

Classified Ads

Place an Ad 24/7
New Today
Announcements
Employment
Rentals
Real Estate
Boating
Miscellaneous
Financial
Service Directory
Transportation
Apartment Rentals

EPA plan for Aerovox criticized

Selectmen say demolition 'doesn't go far enough'

By Paul Gately, Standard-Times correspondent

SDMS DocID

460566

ACUSHNET — Selectmen will tell the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this morning that federal plans to demolish the vacant Aerovox building don't go far enough to protect public health and the environment.

Echoing concerns voiced by the Coalition for Buzzards Bay, the board said capping cancer-causing PCBs in the foundation with 2 feet of clean earth isn't adequate.

The public comment period for the Aerovox demolition project ends today.

While they agree that the 450,000-square-foot building needs to be demolished, selectmen said officials need to give more thought to the PCBs that will be left behind — and what effect they might have on site redevelopment and the quality of the Acushnet River which Aerovox borders.

Federal officials have proposed the \$7.9 million demolition of the vacant plant on the Superfund site given the fire threat it poses to residents on both sides of the Acushnet River.

Selectmen and the coalition agree if Aerovox ever caught fire, the threat to public safety could necessitate evacuating neighborhoods on both sides of the river. Burning materials would release PCBs and asbestos into the air along with other harmful fumes.

"Imploding the building into itself doesn't go far enough," selectmen Chairman Robert F. Brown said last night. "I agree with the coalition. More can be done."

Selectmen also agreed last night it would likely prove difficult to attract a developer for a building that remains toxic. They agree with the coalition, located down Belleville Avenue from the old mill, that it makes sense to invest additional federal funds in the project and try for more site remediation now rather than settle for the "least protective alternative."

The PCBs — polychlorinated biphenyls — were produced in the manufacture of electric capacitors and transformers from 1940 to 1977 when they were banned by the federal government. The PCBs were routinely washed into the river during Aerovox's long production period in which it manufactured electrical parts.

The EPA contends the project using capping is environmentally viable and less costly than the \$14.5 million to \$18 million to rid the site of all contamination and dispose of it off site. EPA project manager David Dickerson has said the Aerovox project might start as early as the summer of 2007.

The overall goal is demolition, he said, and attracting a redeveloper for the site who would not unearth the foundation cap and who would agree to further site remediation.

The coalition says Aerovox is one of the most highly contaminated buildings for PCBs in the country. It contends rainstorms can cause site runoff of toxin laden soil into the river. It says it remains concerned with site integrity and long-term uses of the river.

The EPA, however, contends the PCBs ultimately buried beneath clean soil and vegetation would be non-migratory. The project includes a federal agreement to monitor air quality during the expected year-long operation and provide New Bedford with demolition funding.

What to do with the contaminated site has prompted characterizations that

Break

Cuba Rel.
CastroDell Rea
Batteries

Barbara's

Break

Garage / Yard Sale

it is a toxic time bomb, a community nuisance, a fire threat and a massive environmental issue with new ideas emerging about what to do with PCB contamination.

Subscribers Only

Full Headlines

Obituaries

Lottery

Crossword

Horoscopes

Back Editions

Special Reports

Police Logs

Building Permits

What to do with the site afterward remains a question mark and city ideas about redevelopment so as to avoid simply fencing off a riverside site that cannot be used again.

Selectmen said that whatever happens across the river, it is in Acushnet's best interest to monitor developments and press for a federal Aerovox option that best protects the community.

Date of Publication: August 15, 2006 on Page A03



DISCUSS
THIS STORY



PRINT THIS
PAGE



EMAIL TO
A FRIEND



PURCHASE
PHOTOS

Add your voice

Which candidate would
make the best governor?

- ☐ Chris Gabrieli
- ☐ Kerry Healy
- ☐ Christy Mihos
- ☐ Deval Patrick
- ☐ Tom Reilly
- ☐ None of the above

Vote

[Top](#) [Site Map](#) [Subscribe](#) [Advertise](#) [Contact Webmaster](#)

© Copyright 1995-2006 - The Standard-Times. The Standard-Times maintains the copyright for all material posted here. Any reproduction for purposes other than personal use will be considered a violation of that copyright. Call us at 508-997-7411.

Visit our sister site, discovernantucket.com, the insider's guide to the Best of Nantucket.